

# **ALASKA FALCONRY MANUAL NO. 8**



**Alaska Board of Game  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
July 1, 2008**

## IMPORTANT DATES

<b>January 10</b>	Due date for annual falconry and raptor propagation reports. Date to request permit renewal (unless otherwise specified). Requests for renewal must be submitted <i>at least 20 days prior to expiration of the current permit</i> .
<b>January 31</b>	Date falconry and raptor propagation permits expire.
<b>May 26 – August 5</b>	Period when eyases may be taken.
<b>August 15 – November 30</b>	Period when passage birds, adult American kestrels and adult great horned owls may be taken.

## IMPORTANT REMINDERS

<b>Taking Raptors</b>	Report to the regional falconry representative and nearest department office in the intended area of take <i>prior to and within 5 days after</i> taking a raptor from the wild. You must also report to both the ADF&G Permits Section and the USFWS (Form 3-186A) <i>within 5 days</i> of taking a raptor. Additional reporting requirements apply for peregrine falcons.
<b>Markers</b>	Upon taking a peregrine falcon or gyrfalcon, a USFWS marker (black band) must be attached; a department marker (red band) must be placed on any other raptor originating from the wild and possessed in Alaska.
<b>Release/Loss/Death of Raptors</b>	Notify the regional falconry representative <i>prior</i> to the intentional release of any raptor. Notify the ADF&G Permits Section and the USFWS (Form 3-186A) of the loss, escape, release, or death of any raptor <i>within 5 days</i> of such occurrence. Deliver the marker from a dead or released raptor to the regional falconry representative <i>within 15 days</i> of death or release.
<b>Import/Export</b>	<p>Prior written approval from the ADF&amp;G Permits Section is required before any raptors may be <i>imported</i> into or permanently <i>exported</i> from Alaska.</p> <p>A person with a current permit for falconry from another state or province may import raptors and use them for falconry for up to 30 days under the terms of a temporary import permit issued by the ADF&amp;G Permits Section.</p> <p>Raptors imported into Alaska must be accompanied by a health certificate issued within 30 days prior to the date of importation. A "health certificate" means a legible certification issued by an accredited veterinarian of the state of origin or the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (APHIS-USDA) and executed on an official form of the state of origin or of the APHIS-USDA. Consult the State Veterinarian (Department of Environmental Conservation) or ADF&amp;G Permits Section for current disease testing requirements before applying for an import permit.</p> <p>For raptors traveling through Canada or to or from a foreign country, please contact the U.S. Customs Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to obtain information, appropriate declaration forms, and export/import permits or licenses.</p>

Cover illustration courtesy of William R. Tilton

## CONTENTS

### General Information

Purpose.....	1
Falconry Permits .....	1
Application Procedures .....	2
Falconry Examination .....	3
Facilities and Equipment .....	5
Records and Reporting.....	6
Markers .....	7
Banding .....	7
Captive Breeding .....	9

### Falconry Regulations

5 AAC 92.029 .....	10
5 AAC 92.037 .....	10

### Falconry Standards

Definitions .....	13
Falconry Permits .....	13
Falconry Permit Requirements and Application Procedures .....	15
New (apprentice) falconers .....	15
Renewing a permit .....	15
Upgrading a permit .....	16
Transferring a permit from another state .....	16
Temporary Facilities .....	16
Annual Report.....	16
Markers .....	17
Taking of Raptors .....	17
Import/Export.....	19
Transfer of Raptors .....	19
Release, Loss or Death of Raptors.....	20
Imping .....	20
Captive Breeding .....	20
Appendix A: Application Form .....	22
Appendix B: Annual Report Form.....	23
Contact Information .....	Inside Back Cover

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Purpose

Falconry is the sport of pursuing, capturing, or killing game using a trained raptor. Falconry is a lawful hunting method when practiced in compliance with state and federal regulations under the terms of a permit issued jointly by the Commissioner of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). There are eleven species of raptors authorized for falconry in Alaska: sharp-shinned hawk (*Accipiter striatus*), northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*), red-tailed or Harlan's hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), merlin (*Falco columbarius*), gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolus*), American peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*), arctic peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus tundrius*), Peale's peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus pealei*), great horned owl (*Bubo virginianus*), and hybrids of these species produced by a raptor breeder. Alaska regulations require that anyone taking, holding, or possessing one or more of these raptor species for falconry must first obtain a falconry permit.

State falconry regulations were adopted by the Alaska Board of Game to assist in the management of raptor populations and to maintain standards for the care of birds legally held for falconry purposes. This manual includes regulations that pertain to the taking, holding and possession of raptors for falconry and issuance of falconry permits. Whether you are a novice falconer or an experienced falconer who is new to Alaska, the application and reporting procedures may seem complex and are summarized for your convenience below. More detailed information is contained in the Standards section of this manual and is not repeated here; please refer to the Standards section before conducting your falconry activities. Statewide provisions for issuing falconry permits and promulgating regulations are contained in 5 AAC 92.037 and AS 16.05.255. Federal regulations on falconry can be found in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 50, Part 21 (50 CFR §21.28 and §21.29).

### Falconry Permits

A falconry permit, when accompanied by a current Alaska hunting license, authorizes you to hunt game with your falcon in compliance with applicable seasons, bag limits, and other provisions of law. You are responsible for the actions of your raptor while it is hunting. If your bird takes game illegally, you must leave the dead game where it lies, although your raptor may feed on the game before leaving the kill site.

Falconry permits are valid from the date issued through January 31 of the third calendar year following the year of issue (e.g., a permit issued on February 4, 2008 expires on January 31, 2011), unless a shorter period is prescribed on the permit. Not later than January 10 of each calendar year, a permittee must submit an annual report (Appendix B) to the ADF&G Permit Section.

Raptors legally possessed under an Alaska falconry permit may not be bred in captivity and birds taken from the wild under authority of a falconry permit may not be sold or bartered. Temporary

transfer of raptors between falconers requires proper notification of state and federal authorities. A permit from the ADF&G Permit Section is required to import a raptor into or permanently export a raptor from the state of Alaska. All raptors imported into Alaska must be accompanied by a health certificate and meet disease testing requirements as specified by the state veterinarian. You may not permanently export a raptor taken from the wild in Alaska unless you have legally possessed the bird in the state for at least one year.

There are three classes of falconry permits issued depending on your experience: apprentice (new falconers); general (at least two years experience as a practicing falconer); and master (at least five years experience as a practicing falconer). You must have a bird in possession to be considered a practicing falconer. The table below summarizes the permit conditions for each class of falconer:

<b>Permit Condition</b>	<b>Apprentice</b>	<b>General</b>	<b>Master</b>
Max no. of falconry birds in possession	1	2	3
Max no. of birds (including replacements) that may be obtained from all sources during any 12-month period	2	2	No limit
Max no. of birds that may be taken from the wild during any 12-month period	2	2	2
Authorized species	American kestrel northern goshawk red-tailed hawk Harlan's hawk	All except eagles (but only falconers with more than 2 yrs. experience at the general class level may take a peregrine falcon from the wild)	All
Possession of hybrids allowed?	No	Yes	Yes

## **Application Procedures**

If you have never held a falconry permit in Alaska before, the basic application procedures are the same whether you are a new (apprentice) falconer or transferring a permit from another state. To apply, you must: (1) pass the Alaska falconry exam; (2) have your raptor facilities and equipment inspected and approved by ADF&G; and (3) submit an application form to the ADF&G Permit Section (new falconers must also include the application fee). Permits may be renewed by checking the renewal box on the annual report form and paying the application fee. Please contact the ADF&G Permits Section or USFWS for the current fee schedule. The application fee may be submitted with the application or mailed directly to the USFWS. Please make checks or money orders (no cash) payable to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

If you are transferring a permit from another state, you must submit photocopies of your current falconry permit, along with copies of your annual reports to document the requisite years of experience at the class level for which you are applying.

To be eligible for an apprentice class permit, you must be at least 14 years of age and be sponsored by a general or master class falconer (a falconer may not sponsor more than three apprentices at one time). Your sponsor will provide help and guidance to get started, but you should expect to invest considerable amounts of time on your own learning about raptors and falconry by reading and observing raptors in the wild. If you do not know any falconers who can serve as a sponsor, contact your regional falconry representative for recommendations or a list of active falconers in your area. You may have to travel long distances to meet with your sponsor. This requirement will not be waived under any circumstances, even if there are no falconers nearby who are willing and qualified to serve as your sponsor.

## **Falconry Examination**

All new (apprentice) falconers and falconers who are transferring a permit from another state must take the Alaska falconry examination. This is to ensure that you are familiar with Alaska's falconry regulations and standards and are knowledgeable about caring for raptors in extreme climate conditions. The falconry examination is designed to test your knowledge of raptor identification, natural history of Alaska raptors, care of raptors in captivity, and Alaska falconry rules and regulations. The test will take a maximum of two hours, and it will be a supervised, closed book examination. You are required to answer correctly at least 80 percent of the questions to pass the test. A person who fails the examination may retake it after waiting at least 30 days, but an applicant may not take the examination more than twice during any six-month period. When you are ready to take the test, contact your regional falconry representative to make the necessary arrangements.

To prepare for the examination, study the falconry standards included in this manual carefully. You must have a thorough understanding of Alaska falconry regulations and standards. Become familiar with the natural history, care, and training of raptors and the art of falconry. Be sure you know how to care properly for raptors in extreme cold and/or wet conditions. References available at libraries or bookstores will acquaint you with caring for a raptor and explain how to train a bird for falconry. Suggested references on falconry and the natural history of raptors are listed below.

### Falconry:

Beebe, F. L. and H. M. Webster. 1994. *North American Falconry and Hunting Hawks*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition. North American Falconry and Hunting Hawks, Denver, Colorado.

Beebe, F. L. 1984. *A Falconry Manual*. Hancock House, Surrey, British Columbia.

Evans, H. 1960. *Falconry for You*. John Gifford, Ltd., London.

- Ford, E. 1992. *Falconry: Art and Practice*. Batsford, London.
- Glasier, P. 1978. *Falconry and Hawking*. Batsford, London.
- Haak, B. A. 1992. *The Hunting Falcon*. Hancock House, Surrey, British Columbia.
- Mavrogordato, J. G. 1960. *A Hawk for the Bush*. H. F. & G. Witherby, Ltd., London.
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- Mitchell, E. B. 1960. *The Art and Practice of Hawking*. C.T. Branford Co., Boston.
- Oakes, W. C. 1994. *The Falconer's Apprentice: A Guide to Training the Passage Red-tailed Hawk*. Eaglewing Publishing, Roy, Utah.
- Parry-Jones, J. 1994. *Training Birds of Prey*. David and Charles, Devon.
- Peeters, H. J. and E. W. Jameson, Jr. 1970. *American Hawking: A General Account of Falconry in the New World*. Privately published, Oakside, Davis, California.
- Turner, R. and A. Haslen. 1991. *Gamehawk: Field and Moor*. Gallery Press, Lavenham, UK.
- Upton, R. 1991. *Falconry: Principles and Practice*. A. & C. Black, London.
- Woodford, M. H. 1977. *A Manual of Falconry, 3rd Edition*. Adam and Charles Black, London.

#### Natural History of Raptors:

- Brown, L. 1977. *Birds of Prey: Their Biology and Ecology*. A. & W. Publishers, New York.
- Clark, W. S. and B. K. Wheeler. 1987. *A Field Guide to Hawks: North America*. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston.
- Cornell Lab of Ornithology and American Ornithologist's Union. *The Birds of North America Online*. 26 June 2008. < <http://bna.birds.cornell.edu/bna>>.
- Dunne, P. and D. Sibley. 1988. *Hawks in Flight*. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston.
- Ferguson-Lee, J. and D. A. Christie. 2001. *Raptors of the World*. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston.
- Fox, Nicholas. 1995. *Understanding the Bird of Prey*. Hancock House Publishers, Blaine, Washington.

- Johnsgard, P. A. 1990. *Hawks, Eagles, and Falcons of North America: Biology and Natural History*. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington DC.
- Newton, I. N. 1979. *Population Ecology of Raptors*. Buteo Books, Vermillion, South Dakota.
- Palmer, R. S. 1962. *A Handbook of North American Birds*. Yale University Press, New Haven, Connecticut.
- Peterson, R. T. 1990. *Western Birds*. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston.
- Poole, A. and F. Gill, eds. 1992-2001. *The Birds of North America*. American Ornithologists' Union, Washington, DC and Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia.
- Weidensaul, S. 2000. *The Raptor Almanac: A Comprehensive Guide to Eagles, Hawks, Falcons, and Vultures*. Lyons Press, Guilford, Conn.
- Wheeler, B. K. and W. S. Clark. 1999. *A Photographic Guide to North American Raptors*. Academic Press, San Diego.

## Facilities and Equipment

You are required to provide adequate facilities for holding a raptor in captivity. You are also required to possess proper equipment for practicing falconry before a permit will be issued. Your facilities and equipment must meet the federal standards set forth in 50 CFR §21.29; these standards are summarized for your convenience below. You should contact your regional falconry representative to make arrangements to have your raptor housing facilities and equipment inspected and approved before submitting your application.

The department has not established specifications for hawk houses or mews. Specifications are readily available in reliable falconry texts if a falconer wishes to construct such facilities. Raptors can be retained in captivity and properly cared for without recourse to construction of mews. Some falconers house their birds in the home or garage and utilize the backyard to meet the needs of their raptors. Consequently, this manual provides only a general description as to what constitutes adequate or inadequate facilities, *leaving final judgment to those who conduct the inspection*.

If mews are constructed for untethered raptors, the following general specifications should apply:

Loft, house, pen or enclosure size:

Large.....8' x 8' x 7'

(Gyr Falcon, goshawk, red-tailed hawk, peregrine falcon)

Small.....6' x 6' x 7'

(American kestrel, merlin, sharp-shinned hawk)



Mews shall have at least one window protected on the inside by vertical bars (dowels, tubing, etc.), spaced narrower than the width of the bird's body. Chicken wire or hardware cloth is unacceptable for covering windows. The door must be secure and easily closed. Artificial (plastic) grass (such as Astroturf®) is recommended for the perching surface of blocks used for falcons; uncovered blocks are *not* recommended. Straw or sawdust/wood chips are *not* suitable for floors of mews due to the potential for harboring aspergillosis or other pathogens. Artificial (plastic) grass is easily cleaned and has proven to be good floor covering for mews.

Tethered raptors should be provided with a padded perch. When placed out-of-doors, raptors should be protected from cats, dogs, and wild predators, excessive exposure to wind, rain, snow or sun, and provided with water for drinking and bathing.

Poor physical condition of raptors (e.g., excessive broken tail and wing feathers, damage to cere and head, dirty appearance) is a sign/symptom of inadequate care. Examples of inadequate housing are:

- bird cage of the pet store variety;
- housing constructed of chicken wire, hardware cloth, or with exposed, sharp obstructions;
- housing with exposure to the elements; or
- unsanitary housing such as unclean chicken houses or pigeon lofts.

An applicant must possess the following falconry equipment before a permit will be issued:

1. Jesses, leashes, and swivels—At least 1 pair of Aylmeri or similar type jesses constructed of pliable, high-quality leather or suitable synthetic material must be used when any raptor is flown free. Traditional 1-piece jesses may be used on raptors when they are not being flown. At least 1 flexible and weather-resistant leash and 1 strong swivel of acceptable falconry design (e.g., Sampo or falconry swivel).
2. Bath container—For each raptor, at least 1 container suitable for drinking and bathing, 2 to 6 inches deep and wider than the length of the raptor.
3. Weighing device—A reliable scale or balance suitable for weighing the raptor(s) and graduated into increments of not more than 1/2 ounce (15 grams).

Applicants should have spare materials and the tools necessary to make additional leashes, jesses, grommets, etc. The size, strength, and type of equipment and facilities should be appropriate for the size and type of raptor being held.

## **Records and Reporting**

Falconry permits are issued with a number of reporting conditions. Failure to comply with these conditions constitutes a violation of your permit and may result in your permit being revoked or your renewal being denied. You are required to file a report annually by January 10 that details the status of all falconry birds in your possession at any point during the preceding calendar year.

Report forms are mailed to falconers in November. Please notify the ADF&G Permits Section if you change your mailing address. You are required to file an annual report even if you do not receive a report form in the mail. Report forms are available on the ADF&G website or from the Permits Section. Please be sure to fill out all the requested information completely; reports with missing information will be returned to the falconer.

If you intend to take a raptor from the wild, you must first notify both the regional falconry representative and the nearest department office in the intended take area of your planned taking activities (including the species, location, and dates). Within 5 days of taking any raptor, you must notify the regional falconry representative in the take area of your completed taking activities, including the specific location and date of take, and the species, age (if known) and sex (if known) of the raptor taken, along with any other information required by the department. There are additional notification and reporting requirements for peregrine falcons; these are detailed in the Falconry Standards section (page 18). In addition, within 5 days of taking any raptor, you must submit USFWS Form 3-186A (Migratory Bird Acquisition/Disposition Report) to the ADF&G Permits Section and the USFWS. Form 3-186A is also used to inform the department and the USFWS in writing of any transfer, release, escape, or death of a raptor within *five days* of such occurrence.

You should always keep a copy of your falconry permits, annual reports, 3-186As, import and export permits and all other falconry-related records.

## **Markers**

Before taking a raptor, you must possess a valid falconry permit and an appropriate USFWS or ADF&G marker (band) issued in your name. USFWS markers are black in color, and department markers are red. Requests for markers should be made *in writing* to the USFWS Migratory Birds Permit Section (black bands) or to your ADF&G regional falconry representative (red bands) well in advance of the date you anticipate needing them.

Immediately upon taking a raptor, you must attach the appropriate marker (see Banding section below). Federal markers (black bands) are used on only two species in Alaska; peregrine falcons and gyrfalcons. Department markers (red bands) are used on all other species (sharp-shinned hawk, northern goshawk, red-tailed or Harlan's hawk, American kestrel, merlin, golden eagle or great horned owl). Once attached, the marker must not be removed, except that the rear tab may be trimmed and any imperfections on the surface may be smoothed, provided that the integrity of the marker and numbering are not affected.

All markers (black and red) from dead or released raptors must be surrendered to the department within 15 days of death or release.

## **Banding**

Applying a falconry marker to a raptor may be challenging, even to an experienced falconer. The paramount consideration in banding any bird is to ensure the marker fits properly on the tarsus

and is applied without injuring or causing undue stress to the raptor. The following guidelines and illustrations are provided to assist you in accomplishing this important task.

1. Record the marker number in your personal banding diary and on USFWS Form 3-186A (Migratory Bird Acquisition/Disposition Report).

**Note:** In Alaska, USFWS markers are used only on gyrfalcons and peregrine falcons. All other raptors require ADF&G markers.

2. Outfit the marker with protective tubing (figure 1). The installation of clear, plastic tubing over raptor markers serves to lessen the risk of injury to raptors by reducing marker abrasion to the tarsus and preventing accidental closure of the marker. Plastic tubing also protects the marker's identification number. The best choice of clear, plastic tubing is AWG Size #10 with standard 0.016" wall thickness, commonly used for electrical wire installation. It is usually available from the USFWS (inquire when requesting markers from USFWS) or may be purchased from hardware and electrical supply stores.

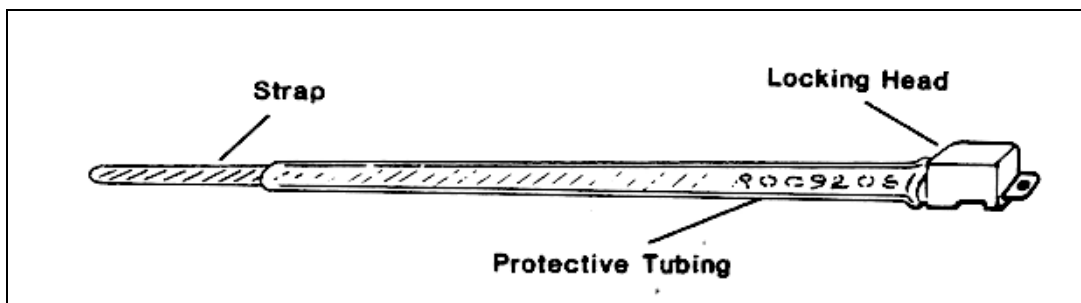


Figure 1

The length of protective tubing placed on the marker is very important since it limits how tightly a band may be closed on the tarsus. Use the following table to determine the length of tubing to apply to the marker:

Species (typical applications)	Length of Tubing (inches)	
	Male	Female
sharp-shinned hawk	3/4	7/8
goshawk	1-3/8	1-1/2
American kestrel	7/8	7/8
merlin	7/8	15/16
peregrine falcon	1-3/8	1-1/2
gyrfalcon	1-7/8	1-7/8
Harlan's hawk	1-7/8	1-7/8

Cut the tubing to length, ensuring the ends are square. Insert the marker strap into tubing as follows: hold the tube against a flat surface, push the strap through the tube until the tip is exposed, and grasp the strap tip and slide the tube solidly against the locking head.

*Do not lubricate the strap or tube.* Pliers are useful for longer tubes. The marker, fitted with protective tubing, is now ready to be placed on the raptor.

3. Attach the marker. Warm the marker in your hand while bending it into a circular form. Position the marker on the tarsus *above* the jess (figure 2). The marker should be placed on the raptor's left leg with the serial number right side up. This will tend to center the locking head in an outboard position if a nametag or bell is attached to the rear tab.

Insert the end of the strap through the locking head box (figure 3). Use pliers to pull the strap through and about an inch beyond the locking head. Slowly close the marker to the appropriate size by pulling the strap through the locking head. It should not be necessary to use pliers.

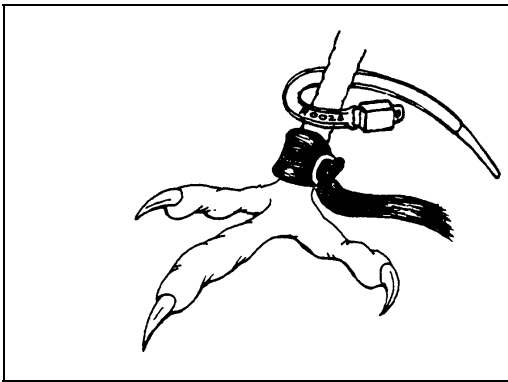


Figure 2

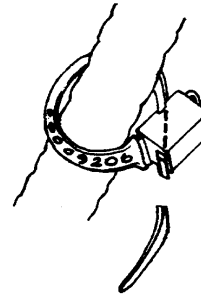


Figure 3

Use fingernail clippers or scissors to cut off the excess strap that extends beyond the locking head. It is important that the strap be cut flush with the surface of the locking head to prevent the bird from pulling at it.

**Note:** A properly fitted marker will move freely on the leg but be tight enough to prevent removal from an unjessed raptor.

## Captive Breeding

Captive breeding or propagation of raptors may only be conducted by qualified falconers under the terms of special propagation permits issued by both the ADF&G Permits Section and the USFWS. For additional information about captive breeding of raptors in Alaska, or to apply for propagation permits, contact the ADF&G, Permit Section and the USFWS, Migratory Birds Permit Section.

## FALCONRY REGULATIONS

### 5 AAC 92.029. Permits for possessing live game.

...

(f) ... the following species may be temporarily released for the purpose of hunting dog or falcon training, field trials, and tests:

(1) Pigeon (*Columba livia* Var.);

(2) Pheasant, Junglefowl, or *Coturnix* (Subfamily Phasianinae);

(3) any Guineafowl species (Subfamily Numidinae);

(4) any New World Quail species, including *Colinus*, [i.e., Bobwhite] (Subfamily Odontophorinae);

(5) any duck, goose, swan, or other migratory waterfowl which the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has determined does not require a federal permit for private ownership;

(6) Chukar partridge (*Alectoris chukar*).

(g) A person using live game listed in (f) of this section for the purpose of hunting dog or falcon training, field trials, or tests

(1) may release the game only on the day of use and shall make reasonable efforts to capture, kill, or recover the temporarily released live game;

(2) may take the live game in connection with hunting dog or falcon training, field trial, and test activities; and

(3) must legally acquire, hold, and dispose of the live game in accordance with all other applicable state statutes and regulations.

...

**5 AAC 92.037. Permits for falconry.** (a) A permit jointly issued by the department and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service is required for taking, transporting, or possessing a raptor for falconry or for practicing falconry in this state. The permit will be issued under standards, procedures, and conditions set out in the Falconry Standards section of the Alaska Falconry Manual No. 8, dated July 1, 2008; that section of the falconry manual is hereby adopted by reference. Only a bird defined in (f) of this section as a raptor may be taken, transported, imported, exported, held, or possessed for falconry.

(b) A person may not permanently export a raptor taken from the wild in this state unless the person has legally possessed that raptor in this state for at least one year. Prior written approval

of the commissioner is required before a raptor may be exported from or imported into this state, except as follows:

(1) a raptor legally possessed by an Alaska falconer may be temporarily exported from this state for a period not to exceed 12 months;

(2) an individual with a permit for falconry in another state or province may temporarily import a raptor, and use it for falconry under the terms of a temporary permit issued by the commissioner; an individual moving into this state may import a raptor under authority of a temporary permit, but must apply for a falconry permit in this state within 30 days after the raptor arrives in this state.

(c) A falconer is liable for the actions of the raptor with respect to seasons, bag limits, and other applicable regulations. If a falconry bird takes game that may not be taken under established regulations, the falconer must leave the dead game where it lies, except that the raptor may feed upon the game before leaving the kill site.

(d) The commissioner may impose additional permit conditions as necessary.

(e) Before taking American or arctic peregrine falcons for the practice of falconry, a permittee must possess either an Alaska master class falconry permit or an Alaska general class falconry permit and have more than two years of experience in the practice of falconry at the general class level.

(f) In this section, "raptor" means any bird of the following species:

- (1) sharp-shinned hawk (*Accipiter striatus*);
- (2) northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*);
- (3) red-tailed or Harlan's hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*);
- (4) golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*);
- (5) American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*);
- (6) merlin (*Falco columbarius*);
- (7) gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolus*);
- (8) American peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*);
- (9) arctic peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus tundrius*);
- (10) Peale's peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus pealei*);

(11) great horned owl (*Bubo virginianus*);

(12) a hybrid of the species in this subsection that is produced by a raptor breeder.

**Note:** For regulations governing hunting of small game and migratory birds, including special seasons and/or restrictions for falconry (5 AAC 85.065), refer to the current **Alaska State Hunting Regulations or Alaska Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations**.

## ALASKA FALCONRY STANDARDS

### Definitions

1. For the purpose of the falconry standards:

- a. “Falconry” means the sport of pursuing, capturing, or killing game by means of trained raptors.
- b. “Take” means to trap or capture, or attempt to trap or capture any raptor.
- c. “Raptor” means any bird of the following species: sharp-shinned hawk (*Accipiter striatus*), northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*), red-tailed or Harlan’s hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), merlin (*Falco columbarius*), gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolus*), American peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*), arctic peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus tundrius*), Peale’s peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus pealei*), great horned owl (*Bubo virginianus*), and hybrids of these species produced by raptor breeders.
- d. “Eyas” means a raptor from the wild in its first year that is not yet capable of flight.
- e. “Passage bird” means a raptor from the wild in its first year that is capable of sustained flight.
- f. “Permittee” means a person who takes, transports, or possesses a raptor for falconry or for the practice of falconry under a falconry permit issued in accordance with the falconry standards in this section of this manual.
- g. “Transfer of raptor” means to transfer or change the possession of a raptor from one permittee to another permittee; transfer does not include the sale, barter, or exchange of a raptor for anything of value.

### Falconry Permits

2. A person may not take, transport, or possess a raptor for falconry or for the practice of falconry in Alaska without possessing a valid falconry permit. A falconry permit shall be issued jointly by the department and a representative of the Alaska office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
3. A falconry permit is nontransferable. When accompanied by a current Alaska hunting license issued to the permittee, a falconry permit authorizes the permittee to hunt game in compliance with seasons, bag limits, and other provisions of law.
4. A falconry permit is valid from the date issued through the 31st day of January of the third calendar year following the year of issue, unless the department specifies a shorter period on the permit.



5. A representative of the department may, at a time mutually agreed upon by the permittee and the department, inspect a permittee's raptor and raptor facilities. If an inspection reveals that a raptor is in poor condition as a result of the permittee's negligence, if facilities are determined to be inadequate under federal standards in 50 CFR §21.29, or if the permittee violates any other provision of the falconry standards in this section of this manual, the department may revoke the permit.
6. Falconry permits are issued for apprentice, general, and master class falconers.
  - a. Apprentice class permits are issued with the following conditions:
    - (1) A permittee may not possess more than one raptor at any time nor obtain more than one raptor for replacement during any 12-month period; and
    - (2) A permittee may take, transport, or possess only the following species, which must be taken from the wild: American kestrel, northern goshawk, and red-tailed or Harlan's hawk.
  - b. General class permits are issued with the following conditions:
    - (1) A permittee may not possess more than two raptors at any time nor obtain more than two raptors, whether for initial stocking or for replacement of raptors already possessed under a permit, during any 12-month period;
    - (2) A permittee may take, transport, or possess only the following species: American kestrel, merlin, northern goshawk, sharp-shinned hawk, red-tailed or Harlan's hawk, gyrfalcon, captive-bred peregrine falcon, great-horned owl, and hybrid raptor. A permittee with more than two years of experience in the practice of falconry at the general class level may also take, transport, or possess a Peale's peregrine falcon, American peregrine falcon and arctic peregrine falcon; and
    - (3) An interspecific hybrid raptor must be surgically sterilized and may not be flown free unless the permittee first attaches to the bird at least one radio transmitter designed to track the bird if it is lost.
  - c. Master class permits are issued with the following conditions:
    - (1) A permittee may not possess more than three raptors at any time. During any 12-month period, a permittee may not obtain more than two raptors taken from the wild. At any time, a permittee may replace a lawfully possessed raptor with a captive-bred raptor bearing a seamless band;
    - (2) A permittee may take, transport, or possess only the following species: American kestrel, merlin, northern goshawk, sharp-shinned hawk, red-tailed or Harlan's hawk, gyrfalcon, Peale's peregrine falcon, American peregrine falcon, arctic

peregrine falcon, golden eagle (federal regulations contain additional provisions and restrictions for golden eagles), great-horned owl, and hybrid raptor;

- (3) An interspecific hybrid raptor must be surgically sterilized and may not be flown free unless the permittee first attaches to the bird at least one radio transmitter designed to track the bird if it is lost.

7. The commissioner may add to a permit other conditions that the commissioner determines are necessary under the circumstances in order to protect raptors that are to be taken, transported, or possessed under the permit.

### **Falconry Permit Requirements and Application Procedures**

8. Requirements and procedures for new (apprentice) falconers:
  - a. An applicant must be at least 14 years of age;
  - b. An applicant must be sponsored by a general or master class falconer;
  - c. An applicant must answer correctly at least 80% of the questions on a supervised examination administered by ADF&G staff; an applicant who fails the examination may retake a similar test after waiting at least 30 days, but an applicant may not take the examination more than twice during any six-month period;
  - d. An applicant's raptor housing facilities and equipment must be inspected by the ADF&G falconry representative for that region and be certified as meeting the federal standards set forth in 50 CFR §21.29; and
  - e. An applicant must submit a falconry permit application and any applicable fees to the ADF&G Permits Section. An application form is included in the Alaska Falconry Manual and forms are also available from the Permits Section or the regional offices of the department.
9. Requirements and procedures for renewing a permit:
  - a. To renew a falconry permit, a permittee must check the "Are you requesting renewal?" box on the annual report form and pay all applicable fees (please check with ADF&G Permits Section for a current fee schedule). A permit will not be renewed unless the permittee has complied with all reporting requirements and other provisions of the falconry standards in this manual.
  - b. Renewal permits are valid from the date issued through the 31st day of January of the third calendar year following the year of issue, unless the department specifies a shorter period on the permit.

10. Requirements and procedures for upgrading a permit:
  - a. To upgrade a falconry permit, a permittee must submit a written request for an upgrade to the ADF&G Permits Section. The request must specify the number of months of experience the applicant has in the practice of falconry and provide written documentation (annual reports) to support the request (only time with a bird in possession counts as experience). Apprentice falconers must also obtain a letter of recommendation from their sponsor supporting the upgrade.
  - b. A request for an upgrade will be granted at the discretion of the department. A request may be denied due to failure to comply with permit conditions and reporting requirements, substandard raptor housing facilities, birds that are in poor condition, or loss or deaths of raptors in the applicant's care.
  - c. An upgrade may be requested at any time and there is no fee to upgrade an existing permit. The existing permit will be re-issued at the higher class level and will retain the original expiration date.
11. Requirements and procedures to transfer a falconry permit from another state:
  - a. The procedures for transferring a permit from another state are the same as for new falconers, except that no sponsor is required and the falconer must submit a copy of his or her current falconry permit along with the application;
  - b. An Alaska falconry permit issued to a falconer from another state will be issued at the apprentice class level unless the falconer can provide copies of annual falconry reports documenting the requisite experience to qualify at a higher class level.

### **Temporary Facilities**

12. A permittee shall provide all raptors being transported or held in a temporary facility with safe, humane housing and shall protect the raptors from extreme temperatures and excessive disturbance. A person may not hold a raptor in a temporary facility for longer than 30 days.

### **Annual Report**

13. No later than January 10 of each year, a permittee shall submit to the ADF&G Permits Section an annual report that lists all raptors in the permittee's possession and all raptors held during the previous year. For each raptor, the permittee shall indicate the species, marker number, sex (if known), age (if known), date and location of acquisition, manner (escaped, released, or died) and date of disposition, location of escape or release or cause of death, and other information relating to the permittee's falconry activities, as required by the department.

## Markers

14. Before taking a raptor, a permittee shall obtain a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or ADF&G marker issued in the permittee's name. Upon taking a peregrine falcon or gyrfalcon, a permittee shall immediately attach the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service marker to the raptor. Upon taking a sharp-shinned hawk, northern goshawk, red-tailed or Harlan's hawk, American kestrel, merlin, golden eagle, or great horned owl, a permittee shall immediately attach the ADF&G marker to the raptor. The marker may not be removed, except that the rear tab may be removed and any imperfections on the surface may be smoothed if the integrity of the marker and numbering are not affected.

## Taking of Raptors

15. An eyas may be taken only from May 26 through August 5. A passage bird, adult American kestrel, or adult great horned owl may be taken only from August 15 through November 30. Except for American kestrels and great-horned owls, a raptor that is over one year of age may not be taken. An eyas may be taken only by general or master class falconer; no more than two eyases may be taken during the specified period; and, at least one nestling must be left in any nest from which a bird is removed.
  - a. Peregrine falcon take requirements:
    - (1) An Alaska master class permittee, and an Alaska general class permittee with more than two years of experience in the practice of falconry at the general class level may take peregrine falcons; and
    - (2) Peregrine falcons may not be taken from a corridor extending one-half mile on either side of the Colville River, beginning at the mouth of the Etivluk River and extending downstream to Ocean Point, nor from a corridor extending one-half mile on either side of the Yukon River, beginning at the Alaska/Canada border and extending downstream to Circle, Alaska.
    - (3) The department may restrict the take of peregrine falcons from specific sites or general areas.
16. Permittees must comply with the following notification requirements when taking raptors for falconry:
  - a. Regional falconry representatives and department offices where permittees must report their planned and completed taking activities:
    - (1) Game Management Units 1 - 5: ADF&G, Division of Wildlife Conservation, Region I, 803 3rd Street, P.O. Box 110024, Douglas, AK 99824-0024;
    - (2) Game Management Units 6 - 17: ADF&G, Division of Wildlife Conservation, Region II, 333 Raspberry Road, Anchorage, AK 99518-1565;

- (3) Game Management Units 19 – 21, 24, 25, 26B, and 26C: ADF&G, Division of Wildlife Conservation, Region III, 1300 College Road, Fairbanks, AK 99701-1599;
  - (4) Game Management Units 18, 22, 23 and 26A: ADF&G, Division of Wildlife Conservation, Region V, Pouch 1148, Nome, AK 99762;
  - (5) State copy of form 3-186A: ADF&G, Permits Section, Division of Wildlife Conservation, 1255 West 8th Street, P.O. Box 115526, Juneau, AK 99811-5526; and
  - (6) Federal copy of form 3-186A: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Migratory Birds Permit Office, 1011 East Tudor Road, Anchorage, AK 99503.
- b. Before taking any raptor from the wild, a permittee must notify:
- (1) the department regional falconry representative in the intended area of take of the permittee's planned taking activities, including the area, species, and timing of take; and
  - (2) the nearest department office in the intended area of take of the permittee's planned taking activities, including the area, species, and timing of take.
- c. Within five days after taking a raptor, excluding an American peregrine falcon or arctic peregrine falcon, a permittee must:
- (1) notify the department regional falconry representative in the area of take of the permittee's completed taking activities, including the specific location, date, species, age (if known) and sex (if known) of take; and
  - (2) submit other information related to the taking, as requested by the department.
- d. Within five days after taking an American peregrine falcon or arctic peregrine falcon from the wild, a permittee must:
- (1) notify the department regional falconry representative in the area of take of the permittee's completed taking activities, including the specific location of taking, date, species, age (if known), sex (if known), and the number of young in the nest at the time of taking (when eyas birds are taken);
  - (2) notify the department regional falconry representative in the area of take of the specific location of all American peregrine falcon or arctic peregrine falcon nests visited, the number of young in each nest visited, and other information requested by the department; and

- (3) submit to the department regional falconry representative in the area of take any leg band retrieved from an American peregrine falcon or arctic peregrine falcon removed from a nest.
- e. Within five days after taking any raptor, a permittee must submit copies of federal form 3-186A (Migratory Bird Acquisition/ Disposition Report) to the following locations:
  - (1) ADF&G Permits Section; and
  - (2) U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Migratory Birds Permit Office.

### **Import/Export**

- 17. Except for the temporary export of a raptor possessed under an Alaska falconry permit, a person shall obtain prior written approval from the ADF&G Permits Section before exporting a raptor from or importing a raptor into Alaska. A person may not permanently export a raptor taken from the wild in Alaska unless that person has legally possessed that raptor in Alaska for at least one year. If the department determines it to be necessary to conserve or protect raptors in the state, or if the person desiring to import or export a raptor has not fully complied with the conditions or requirements of the falconry standards in this section of this manual, the department may disapprove the import or export of a raptor.
- 18. A person with an Alaska falconry permit who legally possesses a raptor may temporarily export the raptor from Alaska for a period of not longer than 12 months. A permittee shall notify the regional falconry representative of the temporary export of a raptor at least five days before leaving Alaska, shall provide the date of departure and anticipated date of return, and shall notify the department's regional falconry representative within five days after returning the raptor to Alaska.
- 19. A person with a permit for falconry in another state or province may temporarily import a raptor and use it for falconry for up to 30 days after the date of import under that falconry permit. If a person who temporarily imports a raptor intends to keep the raptor in Alaska longer than 30 days after the date of import, the person must, within the 30-day period, apply for an Alaska falconry permit, deliver to the department any falconry permit issued for the raptor by another state or province, and certify in writing that the person intends to become a resident of Alaska.

### **Transfer of Raptors**

- 20. A person may not sell, barter, or exchange for anything of value a raptor held under a falconry permit. A permittee shall notify the regional falconry representative not less than five days before permanently transferring a raptor to another permittee. A person who acquires or disposes of a raptor shall submit copies of federal form 3-186A (Migratory Bird Acquisition/Disposition Report) to both the ADF&G Permits Section and the U.S.

Fish and Wildlife Service within five days after the acquisition or disposal. A person may not permanently transfer possession of a raptor originally taken from the wild in Alaska to a person located outside of Alaska.

21. A person may care for a permittee's raptor if, during the time of care, the person holds a written authorization signed by the permittee. If the period of care will exceed 30 days, the permittee shall notify the regional falconry representative in writing within three days after transferring the raptor. The permittee shall inform the regional falconry representative of the location where the raptor will be held, the reason for the transfer, the name of the person who is caring for the raptor, and how many days the raptor will be in the transferee's care.

### **Release, Loss or Death of Raptors**

22. Only a raptor originally taken from the wild in Alaska may be intentionally released to the wild. Before intentionally releasing a raptor to the wild, a permittee must notify the regional falconry representative and must remove the USFWS or ADF&G marker from the raptor. A permittee must submit copies of federal form 3-186A (Migratory Bird Acquisition/Disposition Report) to both the ADF&G Permits Section and the USFWS upon any loss, escape, release, or death of the permittee's raptor within five days after that event. A permittee must deliver the marker from a dead or released raptor to the regional falconry representative within 15 days after the death or release of the raptor to the wild.
23. A permittee may retrap a marked raptor that is lost to the wild through accident, within five days after its loss, without notifying the regional falconry representative. If the permittee intends to retrap the raptor more than five days after its loss, the permittee must notify the regional falconry representative that the raptor has been lost and that the permittee intends to recapture it. If a permittee recaptures the raptor, previously reported to the department as lost, the permittee must notify the department within 5 days after the recapture.

### **Imping**

24. A permittee may retain or exchange feathers that are molted or feathers from raptors that die in captivity only for imping purposes.

### **Captive Breeding**

25. Unless a person holds a propagation permit issued by the department, the person may not breed raptors in captivity for falconry. Propagation permits are issued under the following conditions:
  - a. The department may issue a propagation permit only to a person who:
    - 1) holds a federal raptor propagation permit,

- 2) holds an Alaska master class falconry permit, and
  - 3) passes an inspection of facilities with the following guidelines:
    - i) adequate chamber size,
    - ii) double-door access to prevent escape,
    - iii) any window protected on the inside with vertical bars,
    - iv) adequate padded perches,
    - v) adequate roof covering of chain-link or welded wire material,
    - vi) adequate floor covering [straw and/or sawdust are not suitable],
    - vii) adequate protection from the elements.
- b. A propagation permittee may have no more than four individual raptors that originated from the wild; no more than two wild-origin birds may be acquired within a calendar year. A propagation permittee may have no more than 12 birds for breeding that include first-generation captive progeny and wild-origin birds. A propagation permittee will have no limit on the number of second or later generation captive-bred progeny held in captive propagation. A raptor held under a propagation permit does not count as one of the three raptors that may be held under a falconry permit.
- c. A propagation permittee may not sell, barter, or exchange for anything of value first generation captive-bred progeny of raptors and may only transfer first generation captive bred progeny to a person in Alaska who holds an Alaska falconry permit or to a person who holds an Alaska propagation permit. The propagation permittee may sell, barter, or exchange for anything of value second or later generation captive-bred progeny to any person holding a falconry license or raptor propagation permit within Alaska or outside of Alaska. The propagation permittee must dispose of captive-bred progeny within one year after hatching. Captive-bred progeny not sold or transferred as described in this subsection may be transferred or otherwise disposed of only with the written approval of the department.
- d. A propagation permittee may not possess a raptor produced by interspecific hybridization unless the raptor has been surgically sterilized.
- e. A raptor that originated from the wild in Alaska and is held under a propagation permit may not be exported from the state.



**STATE OF ALASKA  
ALASKA FALCONRY PERMIT APPLICATION**

**1. NAME**

Last	First	M.I.
------	-------	------

**2. MAILING ADDRESS**

Street or P.O. Box		
City	State	Zip

**3. TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

Home	Business or Message
------	---------------------

**4. EMAIL ADDRESS**

--

**5. ALASKA RESIDENT**

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No   Since _____
--

**6. DATE OF BIRTH**

--

**7. LOCATION OF FACILITIES**

Street	City
--------	------

**8. DRIVER'S LICENSE OR I.D. NUMBER**

State	Number
-------	--------

**9. RAPTORS IN POSSESSION**

Species	Sex	Age	Band Number	Date Acquired	Source (wild or captive-bred)

**10A. PERMIT CLASS**

<input type="checkbox"/> Apprentice
<input type="checkbox"/> General*
<input type="checkbox"/> Master*

**10B. APPRENTICE'S SPONSOR**

Last Name	First	Telephone
Address		Class

**11. FALCONRY EXAM/APPROVAL**

<input type="checkbox"/> Exam Passed	Approved By _____	Date _____
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**12. MEWS INSPECTION/APPROVAL**

<input type="checkbox"/> Mews Inspected	Approved By _____	Date _____
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**13. CERTIFICATION**

I have read and understand the Alaska Falconry Standards. Furthermore, I hereby certify that all information made on or in connection with this application is true and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.	
Applicant's Signature _____	Date _____

\*An applicant requesting a general or master class permit must submit a photocopy of the most recently held permit/license issued from any state or province AND annual falconry reports.

**Please mail application and fees to:  
ADF&G Wildlife Conservation, Permits Section, P.O. Box 115526, Juneau, AK 99811-5526**

# ALASKA FALCONRY REPORT

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ State Permit No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No.: (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (work) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Location of Facilities: \_\_\_\_\_

Class (check one) Apprentice ☐ General ☐ Master ☐

Permit expiration date: \_\_\_\_\_ Are you requesting renewal? Yes ☐ No ☐

## ANNUAL REPORT for \_\_\_\_\_ (year)

### RAPTORS ON HAND AT BEGINNING OF PERMIT YEAR (January 1)

<u>Species</u>	<u>Marker Number</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Year Hatched</u>	<u>Where (GMU subunit) or From Whom Obtained</u>	<u>Date Obtained month/day/year</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	___/___/___
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	___/___/___
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	___/___/___

### RAPTORS ACQUIRED DURING 12 MONTHS ENDING DECEMBER 31

(Raptors acquired from the wild or another person)

<u>Species</u>	<u>Marker Number</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Year Hatched</u>	<u>Where (GMU subunit) or From Whom Obtained</u>	<u>Date Obtained month/day/year</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	___/___/___
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	___/___/___
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	___/___/___
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	___/___/___

### RAPTORS NO LONGER IN POSSESSION

(since previous annual report)

<u>Species</u>	<u>Marker Number</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Year Hatched</u>	<u>Disposition*</u>	<u>Disposition Date month/day/year</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	___/___/___
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	___/___/___
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	___/___/___
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	___/___/___

\***Disposition** (lost, transferred, died, released, stolen): Provide complete details, i.e., where lost or released, to whom transferred, cause of death, etc.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Annual falconry reports are due by January 10. Please mail this report to:  
ADF&G Wildlife Conservation, Permits Section, P.O. Box 115526, Juneau, AK 99811-5526**

## CONTACT INFORMATION

General requests for information about falconry, appointments to take the falconry examination or have your facilities inspected, applications for a falconry permit, requests for state markers (bands), and notification of take or intent to take a raptor from the wild are handled by the regional falconry representative at a regional office of the Alaska Department of Fish & Game, Division of Wildlife Conservation.

ADF&G/Wildlife  
333 Raspberry Road  
**Anchorage**, AK 99518-1599  
Phone (907) 267-2257

ADF&G/Wildlife  
1300 College Road  
**Fairbanks**, AK 99701-1599  
Phone (907) 459-7213

ADF&G/Wildlife  
P.O. Box 240020  
**Douglas**, AK 99824-0020  
Phone (907) 465-4265

ADF&G/Wildlife  
P.O. Box 1148  
**Nome**, AK 99762-1148  
Phone (907) 443-2271

Processing of falconry and state raptor propagation permits, submission of annual reports and 3-186A forms, and requests to import or permanently export a raptor are handled by the ADF&G Permit Section.

ADF&G/Wildlife Permit Section  
P.O. Box 115526  
**Juneau**, AK 99811-5526  
Phone: (907) 465-4148  
Email: [dfg.dwc.permits@alaska.gov](mailto:dfg.dwc.permits@alaska.gov)

For information about health certification and disease testing requirements for the importation of raptors, contact the state veterinarian.

Office of the State Veterinarian  
Department of Environmental Conservation  
500 S. Alaska, Suite A  
Palmer, AK 99501  
Phone (907) 375-8215

For information about federal regulations and permitting requirements, contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Migratory Bird Permits Office  
1011 East Tudor Road  
Anchorage, AK 99503  
Phone (907) 786-3693

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) administers all programs and activities free from discrimination based on race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, marital status, pregnancy, parenthood, or disability. The department administers all programs and activities in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility please write:

- ADF&G ADA Coordinator, P.O. Box 115526, Juneau, AK 99811-5526
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, MS 2042, Arlington, VA 22203
- Office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1849 C Street NW MS 5230, Washington DC 20240.

The department's ADA Coordinator can be reached via phone at the following numbers:

- (VOICE) 907-465-6077
- (Statewide Telecommunication Device for the Deaf) 1-800-478-3648
- (Juneau TDD) 907-465-3646
- (FAX) 907-465-6078

For information on alternative formats and questions on this publication, please contact the following: Publications Specialist, ADF&G/Division of Wildlife Conservation, P.O. Box 115526, Juneau, AK 99811-5526, or call 907-465-4176.

